(b) whether stoppage of North East Express and Puri Express would be made in Barpeta Road railway station; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) At present, there is no proposal for provision of stoppage of South bound and North bound trains at Bijni and Pathshala.

Minimum essential amenities (MEA) as per norms have already been provided at Bijni and Pathshala stations. Further, progress of upgradation works at Bijni and Pathshala stations is as under:

(i) Bijni- Improvement of station building and waiting hall/room (Cost Rs. 29.90 lakh) is planned for completion by 31st March 2009.

(ii) Pathshala- (a) Improvement of station building and waiting hall/room (Cost Rs. 29.90 lakh) is planned for completion by 31st March 2009 and (b) work of extension of platforms to accommodate longer trains (Cost Rs. 30 lakh) recently completed.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The matter has been examined but has not been found feasible.

Strengthening the RPF

82. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the measures taken or proposed to be taken to strengthen the Railway Protection Force in view of the terrorist attack at Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminal;

(b) whether there are any plans to increase the number of RPF battalions;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether it is not a fact that in view of the lack of proper training facilities to RPF personnel and also in the absence of having a special academy for providing modern security system, the security at railway station is not up to the mark; and

(e) if so, the reasons why his Ministry cannot set up special academies in the country to train RPF and RPSF?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Various measures have been taken to strengthen the Railway Protection Force. Important details are as under:-

(i) An Integrated Security System is being installed at all Railway Stations of four Metro cities *viz* Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai and 140 other vulnerable / sensitive stations of Indian Railways. This system will comprise of the following broad areas:-

1. Internet protocol based CCTV System with video analytics.

2. Access control.

3. Personal and baggage screening system.

4. Explosive detection and disposal system.

Guidelines & technical specifications of equipment have been circulated to the General Managers of Indian Railways for implementing the project.

(ii) On the recommendations of the Norms Committee, Rs. 60.76 crore has been sanctioned for procurement of security equipment to strengthen the Railway Protection Force (RPF). The Force is also being provided with modern automatic weapons like AK-47 Riffes, INSAS 5.56 Rifles, Pistol Auto 9mm Al etc. Rs. 14.26 crore have been allocated for procurement of vehicles for RPF to improve mobility of the Force.

(iii) Composite Security plan has been submitted by a Committee comprising of officers from Railways, RPF, IB, CISF, Delhi Police and NSG. This plan has been approved in principle. It is being implemented.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Proposal has come up for creation of 3 more battalions of RPSF (Total 2217 posts in various Grades) against new assets without matching surrender. D&G (Direction & General) provision has been introduced in order to create workcharged posts for safe guarding Railway property and thwarting miscreant activities at remote project sites. Senior Administrative Grade level posts have already been created.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. Jagjivan Ram Railway Protection Force Academy, Lucknow has been granted Central Training Institute status. Training modules have been standardized and upgraded for Zonal Training Centres of Railway Protection Force . Training for trainers programme has been organized in Bomb Detection & Disposal and in Disaster Management. Railway Protection Force personnel trained in these programmes will impart training to other Railway Protection Force personnel. Commando training is being organized at a large scale by getting slots in reputed training centres of other Para Military Forces.

It has been decided to augment infrastructural facilities and equipment in the existing training centres of RPF. In phase-1, following training centres have been selected for upgradation within a time frame of 2 years:

1. Kharagpur (South Eastern Railway)
2. Kimber Garden (Southern Railway)
3. Bandikui (North Western Railway)
4. Rajahi Camp, Goarakhpur (North Eastern Railway)
5. Mokama, (East Central Railway)

Pantry car service in trains

83. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the pantry service in the trains are solely under private contractors with a label of the IRCTC;

(b) if not, the details of trains where IRCTC is directly serving food;

(c) whether the quantity and specification and price of the food served are specified and if so, the details thereof, item-wise; and